

Preface

The 2002 Edition of the ***Guidebook for Environmental Permits in New Hampshire*** (“Guidebook”) represents a significant education and outreach tool for accomplishing one of the most important “core” responsibilities of the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (“DES”) – fair, consistent, timely, and enforceable permitting. DES’s environmental permitting programs are important to the agency’s mission *to help sustain a high quality of life for all citizens by protecting and restoring the environment and public health in New Hampshire*. The various permitting programs are designed to encourage the wise use of natural resources, protect the rights of public and private landowners, complement New Hampshire’s robust economy, and contribute to a healthy and sustainable lifestyle for all residents and visitors. DES follows a three-tiered hierarchy in carrying out its responsibilities to the regulated community: education/outreach, technical assistance, and compliance assurance (including compliance monitoring). Education and outreach form the cornerstone of creating a better understanding of why and how environmental permitting is accomplished by providing permit applicants with all of the information necessary to efficiently navigate through the process and receive a reasoned, technically-sound decision within the shortest possible time.

This *Guidebook* has been designed for use by a wide audience, assisting those who are unfamiliar (or only somewhat knowledgeable) with environmental permitting requirements, as well as those who are more experienced with DES programs. It provides information on the substantive and procedural aspects of environmental permitting, but does so in common terms (whenever and wherever possible) to explain what is expected in permit applications. Its format is designed with a chapter introduction for each major category of permitting (e.g., air quality, groundwater, solid waste, etc.) to orient the reader with the broader scope of a permitting program at DES, and then proceeds to a more detailed presentation of facts and requirements for individual authorizations contained within that chapter. The individual authorization types are presented in a format that highlights important regulatory information (e.g., State statute, administrative rules, fees, how to modify or renew, etc.) and then matches that with practical considerations, including challenging the user to ask the most basic “qualifier question” possible to determine whether or not a particular authorization is needed. If it is, the application process and its requirements are then listed in a condensed form below the qualifier question. The scope of this listing stops at the point of actual application submittal to DES. A list of typical types of projects or practices is provided as a final check for the *Guidebook* user to further gauge the authorization’s applicability to his/her particular project, practice, or need. This gives the user some insight into how this authorization has actually been applied in the past. Every possible Internet link to useful documents (e.g., federal and state statutes, administrative rules, guidance documents, fact sheets, and forms) has been added to the text to expand the scope and usefulness of the *Guidebook*. However, special care was also taken to make the *Guidebook* equally as useful to those who either do not have access to the Internet or prefer not to use it.

We sincerely hope that this new *Guidebook* will be of help to you. If there are questions, or ways to improve its usefulness, please submit all comments or concerns to:

Timothy W. Drew, Administrator, Public Information and Permitting Unit, Office of the Commissioner, New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, P. O. Box 95, 6 Hazen Drive, Concord, New Hampshire 03302-0095. Telephone at (603) 271-3306, fax at (603) 271-8013, or email at tdrew@des.state.nh.us



